Pine-Richland School District

Focused on Learning for Every Student Every Day

Important Back-to-School Safety and Security Update

August 17, 2026



Dear Pine-Richland Community,

We hope you are all having a wonderful summer break! As we prepare to return to school on August 25, we wanted to remind our community of our approach to safety and security. We know that a strong school culture is built through shared responsibility and collaboration.

Over the summer months, we have remained focused on refining our emergency operations planning and staff training. We encourage you to read this message in its entirety and take time to discuss its contents at home as you prepare for the new school year.

PRSD has steadily advanced its multi-layered approach to school safety and security, which includes physical, technological, and cultural components. Supporting a secure learning environment remains central to our focus on learning for every student every day. Our safety efforts are aligned with our work to maintain a positive school culture. Every measure we take to strengthen culture also supports physical safety. By fostering relationships, addressing mental health, and promoting awareness of available reporting tools, we continue to take proactive steps to reduce the likelihood of a crisis in our schools.

Safety and Security



The Northern Regional Police Department is a key partner in our safety and security plan.
In the 2024-2025 school year, we expanded our security presence in all six schools with the addition of two additional NRPD School Resource Officers and three PRSD School Security Officers, all of whom continue to support us in our buildings this year. Each has developed strong relationships with students and staff in their buildings and continue to be an important part of safety and security in the district.

Over the summer, we continued our work with NRPD to plan and prepare for serious security events. NRPD hosted on-site training with local law enforcement agencies, other first responders, and district personnel at Hance Elementary School. Hands-on, in-person training exercises help first responders increase their familiarity with our facilities and campuses to prepare for a variety of emergency situations. This simulation helped the district identify areas of opportunity in emergency planning. We continue to work on reviewing and

refining reunification procedures should a serious event require the evacuation of one of our campuses. We revisit these plans with our partners on a regular basis for review and refinement.

Last September, we began rolling out the OpenGate Metal Detector system and did training exercises with students and staff at all six schools and athletic events. The OpenGate Metal Detector System is used to screen individuals for prohibited items in a way that is designed to be quick and non-intrusive. Although not planned for daily use, building and district administrators collaborate with the safety committee to determine when and where the units will be deployed, consistent with **applicable board policy**, in order to further enhance our existing security measures.

In addition to the support provided by our district-employed social worker, school counselors, and psychologists, we partner with Glade Run Lutheran Services to offer school-based mental health services as a supplemental resource for students and families. New intakes for outpatient referrals can be completed by contacting your child's **school counselor**.

Safety and Security Drills

As a reminder and public notice, monthly safety and security drills are held in each school as part of our safety and security program. These drills help our students and staff practice what to do in the event of a fire, severe weather event, lockdown, or other emergency scenario. These drills are held routinely throughout the school year.

E-Vehicle Reminder



As a reminder, **recreational e-vehicles are prohibited on campus**. Students are permitted to ride traditional bicycles and pedal-powered e-bikes to campus for school, provided they have permission from their parents and the building principal. These vehicles must be secured at designated bicycle racks and are not to be driven elsewhere on school grounds.

All other e-vehicles are strictly prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, e-scooters, golf carts, e-motorcycles, and go-karts. These measures are necessary because our campuses remain active after school hours with students, families, and young children participating in various events.

Emergency Communication

When an emergency occurs, parents/guardians are contacted via our rapid call system and will receive a telephone call, email and text message. We will also share an email with our entire community to ensure clear communication.

Please verify that your emergency contact information is up-to-date in the **Sapphire Community Portal**. Ensure that you are **signed up to receive district eBlasts** so that you are notified in the event of an incident at a school where you do not have children attending.

Remember, **do not come to campus** during an emergency situation. It is critically important that our campuses remain accessible to first responders

should an emergency occur. Campuses will close during emergency events and parents will be asked to await further information and not report to campus.

School Bus Safety Reminder



As school buses return to our roadways, we ask all drivers to use extra caution and remain alert, particularly near bus stops and in school zones. Please remember to stop when a school bus has its red lights flashing and stop arm extended, and never attempt to pass a stopped school bus.

This reminder is especially important in our area. Recent data from the Administrative Office of Pennsylvania Courts shows that Allegheny County accounted for 19% of Pennsylvania citations for illegally overtaking or passing a school bus, the highest percentage of any county in the Commonwealth.

Please help us keep our students safe by slowing down, staying alert, and stopping for school buses. Allow extra time during morning and afternoon commutes, and watch carefully for students entering or exiting buses and crossing roadways.

Report, Don't Repost

We continue to emphasize the importance of reporting as a critical aspect of school safety and security. We encourage all students, staff, and families to **report rather than repost** information spotted on social media. We encourage everyone—students, parents, and staff—to be vigilant and proactive in reporting any safety concerns.

If you or your child(ren) have any information related to any safety matter, please contact the Northern Regional Police Department at 724-625-3157 or dial 911 if there is an immediate concern, use the Safe2Say Something application or **website** to make an anonymous report, or reach out to building or district administrators for guidance and support.

Parents and guardians can refer to security resources at **https://www.pinerichland.org/parent-resources/school-safety/school-safety-resources** for more.

Thank you for reading this important safety and security update. We are looking forward to welcoming all of our students back on August 25!

Sincerely,

Pine-Richland School District

Website

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